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March 2, 2021

Members of the Commission for Equitable Funding for Early Childhood Education and Care:

On behalf of the 130,000 members of the Illinois Education Association I want to thank the members of the Governor's Commission on Early Childhood Funding for beginning a discussion of the Illinois system of Early Childhood Education and for developing a critical evaluation of our current system. This evaluation has led the Commission members to a recommendation for changes in our system and we welcome both the suggestions and the opportunity to continue in conversation with stakeholders around this crucial state need.

We are in agreement that our youngest children, and often the children of Illinois families most in need of support in early childhood development, are, in many cases, being systematically under-served by our current system. This is a matter both of the constitutional mandate for a high-quality system of public education for all the children of Illinois and of equity.

At this time, we support the recommendations of the Commission's draft report as being conceptually sound. We will evaluate any formal recommendations for change as those are developed and take a position on those when we have more clarity.

We thank the Commission for this opportunity to work together toward a balanced and stronger public education system for the State of Illinois.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathi Griffin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kathi Griffin, President  
Illinois Education Association